

Hayes 0, Wycombe Wanderers 1
WYCOMBE Wanderers moved into the thick of the Berger Isthmian League leadership chase on Tuesday night when gaining a narrow but deserved victory over Hayes with a goal ten minutes from time. This win takes Blues into a challenging fourth spot.

Their undoubted hero was new central defender Steve Hardwick, who not only rescued Wycombe with a dramatic clearance at the end of the first half but played a major part in the winning goal.

Hardwick, who came into the side to replace Keith Mead for last Saturday's match against Tooting, will hold on to his place for a long time to come if he continues to

show the form he displayed at Church Road.

Wanderers, who dominated the match for long periods, without ever slipping into top gear, seemed to have frittered away too many chances and were clearly settling for a draw when Hardwick produced that touch of class to clinch all three points for his team.

John Priestley, not the longest thrower in the team, sent a throw-in from the left side of the pitch into the penalty area. Hardwick rose and sent a back-headed flick curling towards the goal with 'keeper Alan Jarrett well beaten.

Dylan Evans, following up applied the final touch, although it was Hardwick who was mobbed by his teammates as they went back to the halfway line. Afterwards Hardwick claimed the goal.

Manager Andy Williams con-

firmed after the match that the club would credit the goal to Hardwick.

In any case, what really matters is that it was a precious goal for Blues, who now trail the top trio of teams Croydon, Walthamstow and Dulwich Hamlet by three points.

ONE CHANGE

Manager Andy Williams made just one change to his team that beat Tooting. Terry Scott, substituted towards the end of that game, was replaced by Derek Harris, while the number 12 shirt was worn by Jock Mackenzie.

Wanderers started the match briskly forcing three corners in the first 10 minutes without ever threatening a goal. The first danger to the Hayes defence came from a 'blindsides' run by Mick Holifield who appeared to be

brought down inside the penalty area by Reg Leather.

The line markings on the pitch were difficult to make out, and the referee awarded a free-kick a long way from the original incident outside the area. Holifield took the kick and Jarrett got down well to save Alan Phillips header, at the second attempt.

Wycombe continued to dominate and wasted two excellent scoring opportunities before the break. The Hayes defence was in all sorts of difficulties from Priestley's free-kick and Evans saw two shots blocked while Hardwick's placed header was cleared off the line.

Moments later a long ball from Priestley on the right found Evans clear at the far post. He headed back into the middle where Derek Harris and Mick Holifield failed to bundle the ball over the line, from a good position.

But it was Hayes who so nearly grabbed the lead just before the interval when Terry Brown was given a free-header from Vic Akers cross. John Maskell somehow got a hand to the ball, which hung dangerously close to the goal before Hardwick made the vital clearance.

Wycombe weakened a little in the second half and Hayes were coming more into the game when Hardwick struck that vital blow 10 minutes from time.

Although not a dirty game, the Hayes substitute Gordon Bartlett was booked for a foul on Paul Birdseye a minute later. Despite some late pressure Hayes never looked like snatching the game out of the fire.

HAYES: A. J. Jarrett, A. Carrington, V. Akers, L. Craker, R. Leather, D. Yerbiv, R. Nelson, R. Wiles (sub: G. Bartlett 71 mins), G. Gilbert, T. Brown, M. McGovern.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell, R. Davies, P. Birdseye, S. Hardwick, A. Phillips, D. Allanson, D. Harris, M. Holifield, D. Evans, J. Priestley, S. Long, Sub: G. Mackenzie (not used).

Referee: M. G. Richardson.

Half-time: 0-0. **Scorer:** Wycombe — Hardwick (80 mins).

Hayes 0, Wycombe Wanderers 1 Report by MICHAEL KNOX

Wycombe's revenge bid

WYCOMBE Wanderers have a quick chance of revenge when they meet Dagenham in the Berger Isthmian League at Loakes Park tomorrow (Saturday), because it was 'the Daggers' who beat Blues in the first league game of the season.

Andy Williams, whose first match that was as Wycombe's manager, was disappointed with that 1-0 defeat. "We should have drawn over there but we gave a poor goal away. If we play like we have been playing in the last few games, we're in with a good chance," he said this week.

Since that initial success, Dagenham have suffered a somewhat mixed season and at one stage were near the bottom of the table. But they have picked up since then, although they lost 2-0 at home to Dulwich Hamlet on Monday.

They stand slap in the middle of the table — 11th out of 22, and will be keen to move up the table. But Wycombe who are now fourth will be determined to consolidate their improvement, even without the services of the injured Stewart Atkins.

BERGER ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croydon	8	6	0	2	18	7	18
Walthamstow	8	6	0	2	16	8	18
Dulwich	8	5	3	0	9	2	18
Wycombe	8	5	0	3	14	6	15
Woking	8	4	3	1	18	11	15
Litherhead	7	4	2	1	13	4	14
Hitchin	7	4	1	2	13	11	13
Enfield	8	4	1	3	11	9	13
Barking	7	4	1	2	18	11	12
Hayes	7	3	3	1	7	5	12
Dagenham	8	4	0	4	11	11	12
Bore'wood	8	3	2	3	10	10	11
Slough	8	3	2	3	6	8	11
Hendon	8	2	3	3	9	14	9
Tooting	8	2	2	4	10	14	8
Oxford	7	2	2	3	11	16	8
Kingston	8	1	3	4	7	13	6
Carshalton	8	0	5	3	8	14	5
Sutton	8	1	2	5	7	14	5
Leytonstone	8	1	1	6	4	10	4
Tilbury	7	1	1	5	4	14	4
Staines	8	1	1	6	7	19	4